

“Letter to the Church of Ephesus”

Revelation 2: 1-7

March 1, 2020

Christ addresses the seven Churches located in Turkey

How Christ views each Church:

- 1) Ephesus - lost their first love
- 2) Smyrna - the persecuted Church
- 3) Pergamos - the compromised Church
- 4) Thyatira - the corrupt Church
- 5) Sardis - the dead Church
- 6) Philadelphia - the faithful Church
- 7) Laodicea - the lukewarm Church

The order of the letter proceeds in a clockwise pattern representing the passage of time



THE SEVEN CHURCHES



● PERGAMUM

Caicus R.

2

● SMYRNA

1

3

● TR

● PHILADELPHIA

6

7

● LAODICEA

Why only seven Churches?

These seven Churches represent all the other Churches; these seven Churches are present today!

The invisible Church - all true believers that compose the body of Messiah

The visible Church - is composed of believers and non-believers since Pentecost

Wheat and tares parable -

Matthew 13: 24-30

There are four things common to each Church:

- 1) Each has a description of the *Glorified Jesus* - Jesus is in the middle of His Church
- 2) Each contains the words *“I know”*
Jesus is aware of the condition of each Church

3) Each has the statement ***“he that overcomes”***

“nikao” = one who gets the victory

- **The Church is expected to overcome the challenges in this life**
(overcomers are true believers who get the victory)

1 John 5: 4

Proverbs 24: 10

4) Each has the statement ***“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the Churches”***

- Overcomers, **heed the Word** and *do not buy into a non-biblical worldview!*

Verse 1

The Destination

The destination is the messenger of each Church and its congregation

Ephesus had a disease, the disease of sensual unrighteousness which corrupted the people

The light of Ephesus died out!

America has the same disease - the light is dimming and may go out soon

What do you think Jesus is saying to America?

TURN AND LIVE!!

There is a true Church in America -
Jesus is in the midst of His Church

Jesus will give His messengers and His Church the ability to STAND through persecution!

This is Jesus' promise to overcomers: carryout your mission - " *lo, I am with you always, even until the end of the age*" - Matthew 28: 20

The reason you can overcome and have victory - *GOD IS WITH YOU!!*

Verse 2 - 3 and 6
The Commendation

- 1) ***“I know your works, your labor, your patience”*** - this is the get-going and get-doing Church
- 2) **They did not put up with evil** - they called sin, *sin*, and wrong, *wrong*
- 3) **They called out false teachers and false apostles** - they called them liars!!

4) **They persevered** - they did not become weary

5) **They hated the deeds of the Nicolaitans** - who ruled over the people, created a distinction between clergy and laity, a power and control trip

What has God put in place to protect His sheep?

Pastors, shepherds, elders

Acts 20: 29-31



Verse 4

Condemnation: you have left
your first love

Busy Church - Busy life = *a set up for drifting*

A drift preventer - *time with the Master*

In one generation, the believers had become lax and cold and drifted from God

This is called the “*second-generation syndrome*” - how is this prevented?

- 1) **Pass on real faith** - allow others to see that you are all in
- 2) **Live out your faith without hypocrisy** - no mask wearing!!
- 3) **Be honest and be real** - when you make a mistake, own it!!
- 4) **Don't be a “know-it-all”** - people retract from “know-it-all's”, especially your children

- 5) **Teach and model your faith** - don't manipulate or coerce, but nurture and nudge in the right direction
- 6) **Don't compromise under pressure** - don't become obnoxious, angry, or degrading; simply stand on Biblical principles with a gentle spirit
- 7) **Be a God pleaser, not a man pleaser** - *easier said than done!*

Verse 5

Exhortation: Remember your
first love and repent

Repent = “*metanoeo*” = a true change of heart and mind toward God

If we do not repent, our lampstand (*our influence*) will be removed - *how sad!*

How do we guard against losing our first love?

- 1) Let go and let God lead your life**
- 2) Introspection - examine your life**

How do we guard against losing our first love? (cont.)

- 3) **When you catch yourself drifting, put your oars in the water and row!**
- 4) **Stay in fellowship** - don't drift and become isolated

Stay close to Jesus; whenever there is a distance between Jesus and me, it is **not** that He moved - ***it was me that moved!***

Verse 7

The Promise to overcomers

This promise is made to individual believers

If a Church goes astray, it is the believer who must overcome - *the individual is responsible!*

If a person finds themselves in a compromised “*progressive*” Church, *run for your life!!*

Overcomers will eat of the *Tree of Life*

The *Tree of Life* gives both the fullness of life and eternal life!

CLOSING: *LETTER TO THE CHURCH OF EPHESUS*

We must constantly **be on guard**
against drifting and *losing our first*
love!

We must avoid the
“second-generation syndrome” by
living genuine Christian lives

**CLOSING: LETTER TO THE CHURCH
OF EPHESUS**

God's answer to the "*second-generation syndrome*" -

Deuteronomy 6: 4-9

"HEAR O' ISRAEL"

**HEAR O' CHURCH TODAY
(the Shema)**

HEAR!!

***DO NOT LOSE
YOUR
FIRST LOVE!!***